Ref. F/37

MINEHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1973

To the Minehead Urban District Council

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present an abridged Annual Report for 1973 on the health of the Minehead Urban District.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

Area: 2,739 acres
Population: 8,180 (Registrar General's mid-year Estimate)
Rateable Value: £558,274
Sum represented by 1p rate: £5,387

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the year

	Male	Female	Total
Live Births: Legitimate .. ..) Illegitimate .. ..)	42	30	72
Still Births: Legitimate .. .. ..) Illegitimate .. .. ..)	-	-	-
Deaths from all causes	84	54	136
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	-	-	-

Climatic Conditions

Rainfall	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Annual	958mm	863mm	817mm	887mm	656.5mm
Average Yearly	846mm	838mm	848mm	855mm	850mm
From 1st June to 30th Sept.	275mm	300mm	238mm	156mm	234mm
Days during period less than 0.3mm..	80	75	79	82	79
Days during period between 0.3mm and 1.0mm	15	10	9	10	8
Days during period more than 1.0mm	27	38	34	30	35

Temperatures	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
Highest Air	26.7°C	29.4°C	24°C	24°C	27°C (16th Aug.)
Lowest Air	-4.4°C	-4.4°C	-4°C	-9.5°C	0°C (15th Feb.)
Lowest Air	-6.6°C	0°C	0°C	1°C	2.5°C (26th Nov.)
Lowest Air during period 1st June - 30th Sept. ..	3.8°C	5.5°C	7°C	5°C	2°C 6°C (2nd June)

Prevalence and Control over Infectious Disease

Notifiable Diseases

	Total
Measles	4
Scarlet Fever	1
Whooping Cough	-
Erysipelas	-
Enteric Fever	-
Dysentery..	-
Food Poisoning	4
Infective Jaundice	2
Acute Meningitis	-
Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1

There were several episodes of infectious disease during the year. A local government employee from South Wales and his wife arrived in Minehead one evening while on a touring holiday. They both became ill in the early hours of the following morning as the result of a salmonella haifa infection. After considerable efforts, the source of their ilness was traced to a food demonstration stand at the Bristol '600' Exhibition. This discovery was helpful in elucidating the pattern of an outbreak of the infection in Bristol.

An employee in a food shop developed a rare variety of salmonella infection. None of the other employees were affected and all of them were 'cleared' after bateriological screening. Much time was devoted to trying to trace the source of the infection with no success.

There was a small outbreak of food poisoning at the holiday camp in the summer. The camp authorities were very cooperative as were the camp staff. It was possible to trace the episode to a particular batch of turkey meat. Measures were adopted to prevent a recurrence.

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE DISTRICT

Health Visiting, Home Nursing and Midwives

These services are provided by the Somerset County Council.

The Home Help Service

This is the responsibility of the County Social Services Department.

Hospitals

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is managed by the West Somerset Hospital Management Committee. The Hospital provides medical, surgical and casualty treatment and out-patient clinics. A Somerset County Family Planning Clinic is held at the Hospital.

Health and Dental Clinic

These are provided by the Somerset County Council at 54 Summerland Avenue, Minehead.

Nursing Home

There are two nursing homes in the district which are registered for 15 patients and 14 patients respectively.

Ambulance Facilities

This service is provided by the Somerset County Council with ambulances stationed at Minehead.

Old Persons Homes

Wyndham House, Martlet Road, which has 33 beds, is maintained by the Somerset County Council's Social Services Department. There are seven private residential homes for the aged with 95 beds. Fifty-one old persons dwellings with Warden accommodation are provided by the Council with grant aid from the Somerset County Council.

/HYGIENE ...

HYGIENE AND SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT

General

The number of inspections and visits made to various premises in the district are detailed below:-

Abattoir	456
Food premises	113
Rodent Control	74
Housing	34
Water Supplies	112
Public Health	128
Infectious Diseases	-
Offices, Shops, etc.	206

Housing

The total number of dwellings in the district is 3,324. During the year 38 dwellings were erected by private enterprise.

The total number of applicants for Council houses at the end of the year was 182.

There was no case of overcrowding reported during the year.

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1973					
By Local Authority 292	By Private Enterprise 667				
No. of permanent dwellings in district as at 31.12.72 (a)	Gained from conversions and erected during 1973 (b)	Total (a) + (b)	Less dwellings demolished, closed, etc. during year	No. of permanent dwellings in district as at 31.12.73	
				L.A.	P.E.
L.A. 390	--	390	-	390	-
P.E. 2,885	49	2,934	-	-	2,934
TOTAL 2,885	49	2,934	-	3,324	

/Improvement Grant ...

Improvement Grants

Number of applications and houses dealt with by Local Authority during the year.

	Received		Approved	
	Applications	No of Dwellings	Applications	No. of Dwellings
Improvement Grants	14	26	13	23
Standard Grants	6	6	8	8
Special Grants	-	-	-	-

Water Samples

The supply of water to the town is undertaken by the West Somerset Water Board. There are six sources of supply with Nutscale supplying the bulk of the water to the town and the other sources are from Broadwood, Longwood, Periton, Middlecombe and Moor Brake. All the sources, except Moor Brake which is from a borehole, are collected from land springs. All the supplies are chlorinated and the Nutscale water is filtered at the Porlock filter station.

Results of Samples taken for analysis

Raw water				Treated water			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical	
Satis-factory	Unsatis-factory	Satis-factory	Unsatis-factory	Satis-factory	Unsatis-factory	Satis-factory	Unsatis-factory
26	15	20	-	48	1	-	-

Once again I am pleased to report that there was only one unsatisfactory sample of treated water during the year.

Sewerage

The sewerage system operated satisfactorily during the year. A meeting was held in November to inform the public about the Council's proposals for a new long sea outfall sewer. The majority of the public at the meeting were not in favour of the scheme until further exhaustive tests were carried out to ensure that no sewage was washed back on to the beach. The Consulting Engineers were instructed to carry out more tests.

Refuse Disposal

The refuse tip in the quarry at Treborough is used for tipping. This arrangement has worked satisfactorily.

/Rodent Control ...

Rodent Control

One part-time operator is employed to carry out the treatment of premises. Dwellinghouses are not charged for this service but the whole cost of treating business premises is recovered. During the year 180 properties were found to be infested with rats.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises

Premises	Number Registered	Number of persons Employed
Offices	44	405
Retail Shops	98	599
Wholesale Departments	2	47
Catering Establishments	24	1,008
Fuel Storage Depots	-	-
TOTAL	168	2,059

Factories

Particulars of premises registered under the Factories Act, 1961 and the inspections made are as follows:-

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health:-

	Number on Register	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	6	4	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ..	44	49	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	50	53	-	-

/2. ...

2. Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Found	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
		Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (a) Insufficient ..	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work) ..	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	-	-	-	-	-

3. Outwork:-

	No. of out workers in August list required by section 110(1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing apparel:						
Making etc.	26	-	-	-	-	-
Cleaning and washing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paper Bags	1	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	27	-	-	-	-	-

Swimming Pools

There are three public swimming pools in Minehead. The Lido, Warren Road is privately owned, and is filled with sea water; two are in the Holiday Camp and are filled with fresh water from the Camp supply. The treatment adopted to maintain their purity is re-circulation, filtration and automatic chlorination.

/Samples ...

Samples are taken frequently to ensure that the degree of chlorination is maintained and there is no trace of bacterial infection. Results of the tests indicated that in all the pools a safe bathing water was maintained.

Holiday Camp

The Camp catered for about 140,000 holidaymakers during the summer season. The Company continued to provide a hygiene adviser who is a retired public health inspector. He will not continue during the 1974 Season, though it is to be hoped that a similar, or better, arrangement will be made.

INSPECTION OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES

The general standard of cleanliness of all food premises in the town was satisfactory and only minor informal action needed to be taken in a few cases.

The number of premises in the district are as follows:-

Abattoir	1	Fried Fish Shops	3
Bakehouses	1	Fruiterers and Greengrocers	10
Baker's Shops	3	Grocers and Confectioners	30
Butchers	6	Holiday Camp	1
Cafes	18	Hostels	1
Chemists	4	Hotels with restaurants	9
Clubs, etc.	8	Hotels, Residential	35
Canteens	2	Licensed Premises	9
Church Halls	6	Pie Factory	1
Dairies	1	Restaurants	10
Dairy Shops	2	School Kitchens	4
Fishmongers	2	Snack Bars	3

Milk

Number of Milk Samples taken in Minehead Urban District during year

Pasteurised	64
Ultra-Heat Treated	12
Untreated	2
	78

The 2 untreated samples which were collected from Mr. F. G. Baker within the Urban District were negative to the test for brucella. He is licensed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in the Rural District of Williton at Greenaleigh Farm, Minehead.

Ice Cream

One property is registered for the manufacture and sale of ice cream and 59 premises for the sale of ice cream.

/Carcases inspected and condemned ...

Carcases inspected and condemned:-

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	302	-	3	2,157	820	-
Number inspected	302	-	3	2,157	820	-
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci						
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	1	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	11	-	-	2	12	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	3.7%	-	-	0.09%	1.5%	-
Tuberculosis only						
Whole carcases condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cysticercosis						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	--	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-

Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for:-	All animals
(a) Tuberculosis	-
(b) Cysticercosis	-
(c) Other	268
Total (in lbs.) condemned	268

/Food condemned ...

Food Condemned

Canned Meat and meat products	120 tins
Frozen Turkey	44 lbs.
Vegetables	98 tins
Fruit	220 tins
Frozen Foods (Various)	Value £204.98
Fish	6 lbs. and 17 tins
Fruit Juice	143 tins
Other foods	303 packets
Preserves	28 tins

There were no substantial health problems in the Urban District in 1973.

This is the last Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Minehead. It is therefore perhaps particularly appropriate for me to thank your Clerk, Mr. Burgess, and your Public Health Inspector, Mr. Symes, for their help over the years and, at the same time, to record my best wishes to them for the future.

J. Beasley

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Taunton.

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